

State: CA

Forest: BLM – Redding Field Office

Project Name: Archaeology of the Blue Ridge Flume Complex III

Project Dates: June 7–11, 2010

Time Commitment: Must commit to minimum of 2 days

Description: Following the Civil War and completion of the Transcontinental Railroad in 1869, the rapid development of northern Californian towns and cities radically increased the need for construction lumber. Prime mountain forests provided the best sources available, but access to these areas was limited – there were few roads into the mountain from the Sacramento Valley and its transportation hubs at the time. Therefore, elaborate wooden flume systems, including Tehama County's 42-mile-long Blue Ridge Flume, were created to carry cut lumber from the heights to distribution centers. Flume tenders lived in key spots along the flumes. Following abandonment in the late 1870s, the flume system was largely dismantled, but vestiges still exist.

Once again, under the direction of Dr. Eric Ritter, archaeologist at the BLM Redding office, PIT volunteers and BLM personnel will survey and record along the Flume in the Blue Ridge area. The data collected will be used to provide interpretive maps across the Bureau's Bend Area of Critical Environmental Concern and proposed National Recreation Area. We will concentrate on 12 miles of flume and support roads/trails and settlement in the lowlands along the Sacramento River near Red Bluff. Volunteers and BLM staff will map the alignment and ancillary features of the flume to determine flume construction and provide data regarding maintenance workers' facilities and lifeways for interpretive purposes. We will use metal detectors for artifact recovery and feature definition. Markers will be installed at key locations, and we will visit historic and prehistoric sites in the vicinity (including petroglyphs, villages, rockshelters and homesteads!). We will also conduct site documentation activities at select locations as time permits. Access to one area will likely involve river raft travel, so we may even have a bit of extra fun during work hours! Please join us for another year at the Blue Ridge Flume Complex.

Number of openings: 15

Special skills: Must be physically capable of hiking several miles each day in fluctuating (summer transitional – often hot) weather conditions over rocky and hilly terrain; experience with metal detector use helpful, but not required; **please note on your application if you have and are willing to bring a metal detector**

Minimum age: 12 years old; under 18 with a responsible adult

Facilities: Primitive camping; toilets and sun showers or equivalent; some travel trailer space available; volunteers responsible for personal camping equipment and food; some drinking water provided by FO

Nearest towns: Red Bluff, 5 miles; Anderson, 10 miles; Redding, 25 miles

Applications due: April 5, 2010

Congressional District: 2nd

Project Leader: Eric W. Ritter, Ph.D.
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Line Officer's Approval: /s/ Steven W. Anderson
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